

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

***This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:***

1. (Currently amended) A recording medium discharge mechanism provided with a discharge space that is positioned between an original capturing portion arranged in a device upper portion and a feeding portion arranged in a device lower portion and that opens laterally to a downstream side in a recording medium discharge direction of an image forming apparatus, comprising:

a recording medium placement surface being a bottom surface of a discharge space, the discharge space having an open portion laterally to a downstream side in a recording medium discharge direction and receiving the recording medium that has undergone image formation in an image-forming portion of the image forming apparatus.

wherein a discharge direction length of the recording medium placement surface is shorter than a length of a paper cassette of the feeding portion arranged to hold one or more types of recording media used in the image forming apparatus;

a biasing member; and

a side wall member positioned at an open portion of the downstream side in the recording medium discharge direction being provided at the downstream end portion in the recording medium discharge direction of the recording medium placement surface,

wherein the side wall member is arranged to be capable of moving between an upright state that closes the open portion of the downstream side in the recording medium discharge direction in the discharge space and a laid flat state in which a recording medium the placement surface for placing a discharged recording medium is extended toward the downstream side in the recording medium discharge direction, and

wherein the side wall member is arranged to be in the laid flat state automatically when the recording medium is longer in the recording medium discharge direction than the recording medium placement surface, and

wherein the side wall member is arranged to be in the upright state automatically when the recording medium is not longer in the recording medium discharge direction than the recording medium placement surface receive a biasing force to the upright state by the biasing member and is configured to move from the upright state to the laid flat state against the biasing force by the biasing member only upon receiving an external force from the recording medium having a discharge speed greater than a predetermined speed or having a hardness greater than a predetermined hardness when the recording medium has been discharged to the discharge space in the upright state of the side wall member that closes the open position.

Claims 2-3 (Canceled)

4. (Currently amended) The recording medium discharge mechanism according to claim 1, A recording medium discharge mechanism positioned between an original capturing portion arranged in a device upper portion and a feeding portion arranged in a device lower portion of an image forming apparatus, comprising:

a recording medium placement surface being a bottom surface of a discharge space, the discharge space having an open portion laterally to a downstream side in a recording medium discharge direction and receiving the recording medium that has undergone image formation in an image-forming portion of the image forming apparatus,

wherein a discharge direction length of the recording medium placement surface is shorter than a length of a paper cassette of the feeding portion arranged to hold one or more types of recording media used in the image forming apparatus;

a side wall member being provided at the downstream end portion in the recording medium discharge direction of the recording medium placement surface,

wherein the side wall member is arranged to be capable of moving between an upright state that closes the open portion of the downstream side in the recording medium discharge direction in the discharge space and a laid flat state in which the placement surface for placing a discharged recording medium is extended toward the downstream side in the recording medium discharge direction; and

a drive mechanism wherein the side wall member is configured to move the side wall member from the upright state to go into the laid flat state prior to a discharge operation of a the recording medium only when a discharge direction length dimension of the recording medium to undergo image formation in an the image-forming portion is longer than a length of a the recording medium placement surface,

wherein the drive mechanism is further configured to move the side wall member from the laid flat state to the upright state following a removal of the recording medium placed on the recording medium placement surface in the laid flat state of the side wall member of the discharge space.

5. (Currently amended) The recording medium discharge mechanism according to claim 1, which is configured such that, when a recording medium the discharge direction length dimension of a the recording medium placement surface of the discharge space is given as L1, a discharge direction the length dimension of a the paper cassette of the feeding portion arranged to hold largest recording medium among a plurality of one or more types of recording media used in an the image forming apparatus is given as L2, and an extension length dimension toward a downstream side in the recording medium discharge direction when the side wall member has been put into the laid flat state is given as L3,

$$L3 \leq L2 - L1.$$

6. (Previously presented) The recording medium discharge mechanism according to claim 1, wherein the side wall member is structured using a transparent member or a semitransparent member.

7. (Previously presented) An image forming apparatus comprising the recording medium discharge mechanism according to claim 1, an original capturing portion arranged at an upper portion of the recording medium discharge mechanism, and a feeding portion arranged at a lower portion of the recording medium discharge mechanism.

Claims 8-11 (Canceled)

12. (Currently amended) The recording medium discharge mechanism of claim ~~11~~ 4, wherein the ~~active side wall moving drive~~ mechanism comprises:  
a rod attached to the side wall member; and  
a solenoid attached to the rod and arranged to move the rod.

Claims 13-15 (Canceled)

16. (New) The recording medium discharge mechanism according to claim 4, wherein an optical sensor is provided on a recording medium carry path for identifying a length dimension in the discharge direction of the recording medium to undergo image formation in the image-forming portion.

17. (New) The recording medium discharge mechanism according to claim 1, wherein the discharge space is formed interior to an image forming apparatus formed by the original capturing portion and the feeding portion.

18. (New) The recording medium discharge mechanism according to claim 4, wherein the discharge space is formed interior to an image forming apparatus formed by the original capturing portion and the feeding portion.

19. (New) The recording medium discharge mechanism according to claim 1, wherein the discharge space is separate from an original discharge space of the original capturing portion into which originally scanned documents are discharged after being scanned.

20. (New) The recording medium discharge mechanism according to claim 4, wherein the discharge space is separate from an original discharge space of the original capturing portion into which originally scanned documents are discharged after being scanned.

21. (New) The recording medium discharge mechanism according to claim 4, which is configured such that, when the discharge direction length of the recording medium placement surface of the discharge space is given as  $L_1$ , the length of a the paper cassette of the feeding portion arranged to hold one or

more types of recording media used in the image forming apparatus is given as L2, and an extension length dimension toward a downstream side in the recording medium discharge direction when the side wall member has been put into the laid flat state is given as L3,

$$L3 \leq L2 - L1.$$

22. (New) The recording medium discharge mechanism according to claim 4, wherein the side wall member is structured using a transparent member or a semitransparent member.

23. (New) An image forming apparatus comprising the recording medium discharge mechanism according to claim 4, an original capturing portion arranged at an upper portion of the recording medium discharge mechanism, and a feeding portion arranged at a lower portion of the recording medium discharge mechanism.